

WHEN PREPARATION H IS NEEDED MOST —

Hospital staff must swear off Tylenol, Tums to get religious vaccine exemption

Hospital CEO aims to educate staff on the full scope of what they're claiming.

BETH MOLE - 9/16/2021, 1:41 PM

Getty | Jeff Greenberg

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A hospital system in Arkansas is making it a bit more difficult for staff to receive a religious exemption from its COVID-19 vaccine mandate. The hospital is now requiring staff to also swear off extremely common medicines, such as Tylenol, Tums, and even Preparation H, to get the exemption.

The move was prompted when Conway Regional Health System noted an unusual uptick in vaccine exemption requests that cited the use of fetal cell lines in the development and testing of the vaccines.



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The list includes Tylenol, Pepto Bismol, aspirin, Tums, Lipitor, Senokot, Motrin, ibuprofen, Maalox, Ex-Lax, Benadryl, Sudafed, albuterol, Preparation H, MMR vaccine, Claritin, Zoloft, Prilosec OTC, and azithromycin.

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Employees are asked to attest that they "truthfully acknowledge and affirm that my sincerely held religious belief is consistent and true" and that they do not and will not use the medications and any

others like them.

The intent of the form is twofold, Troup says. First, the hospital wants to ensure that staff members are sincere in their stated beliefs, he said, and second, it wants to "educate staff who might have requested an exemption without understanding the full scope of how fetal cells are used in testing and development in common medicines."

Troup says that employees who do not sign the attestation form will be granted a provisional exemption, which is only temporary. They may be asked to sign the attestation later and, as the attestation notes, if they fail to get an exemption or a vaccine, they face disciplinary action, including termination.

In an interview with an NBC-affiliated outlet in Arkansas, Troup noted that **only about 5 percent** of the hospital system's staff had filed for a religious or medical exemption and that the rest of the workforce is partially or fully vaccinated.

"A lot of this, I believe, is a hesitancy about the vaccine, and so that's a separate issue than a religious exemption," he said.

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